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## Recent Proceedings of Societies.

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### *Naturalists' field-club of Johns Hopkins university, Baltimore.*

Nov. 25. — Dr. J. P. McMurrich reported on the work of the zoölogical section. A cruise was made down the harbor, and some interesting marine forms taken by the tow-net, including *Evadne*, a cladoceran, and a peculiar copepod. — Mr. W. S. Bailey spoke of the progress made toward completing the geological map of Baltimore, and mentioned the following minerals recently found in the vicinity: malachite and chalcodony (Bare Hills), amethyst (Elysville and Owing's Mills), kyanite and fibrolite in mica schists, on the road between Reisterstown pike and Garrison's lane. — Mr. F. H. Herrick gave the results of observations made this month (Nov. 14-21) on the vitality of plants as exhibited by their persistence in producing flowers. Within the time mentioned forty-six species of plants were found in flower in the neighborhood of Baltimore. Of these, eighteen belong to the order of Compositae, and twenty, or one-half, are weeds introduced from Europe. The latter were usually the freshest, and produced flowers and fruit in greatest abundance. Of the non-introduced plants, single specimens were commonly found, and those often small or withering. Leaving the latter out of consideration, the late-flowering of the introduced species is readily accounted for. Many of them are perennial in the milder climate of Europe, and consequently, when brought to this country, strive to produce flowers and fruit the year round. *Stellaria media*, the common chickweed, is a type of this class, and is virtually in flower the whole year. The snow covers in fall its buds and flowers, which expand as soon as the ice melts from around them in spring. This plant was dug from under two feet of snow in mid-winter in Vermont, and, after being placed in water a few hours, its flowers were fully expanded. This explains its phenomenally early appearance in blossom in spring. — The dispersion of seeds was illustrated by the pods of *Cassia nictitans* and the 'button-balls' of *Platanus occidentalis*. The latter tree produces on the average a thousand seeds to each ball, and therefore, in some cases, many millions of seeds; yet it is far from abundant in this and other localities. The oak, which produces relatively so much less seed, is the prevailing tree in this region. The sycamore belongs to an ancient type, the same genus being found among the fossils of the Laramie group. The conditions for its abundant growth are apparently less favorable than formerly. — Dr. Barton spoke of the bursting of the pods of the *Wistaria*, comparing the sound produced to a pistol-report.

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### Calendar of Societies.

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#### *Philosophical society, Washington.*

Dec. 5. — Annual address by the president, Asaph Hall; subject, American scientific societies.

Dec. 19. — The following officers were elected for 1886: President, J. S. Billings; vice-presidents, William Harkness, Garrick Mallery, C. E. Dutton, J. E. Hilgard; treasurer, Robert Fletcher; secretaries, G. K. Gilbert, Marcus Baker; members at large of

the general committee, H. H. Bates, F. W. Clarke, W. H. Dall, J. R. Eastman, Henry Farquhar, G. B. Goode, T. C. Mendenhall, H. M. Paul, C. V. Riley.

#### *Anthropological society, Washington.*

Dec. 1. — C. F. Adams, The omitted factor in the promotion of the public good.

Dec. 15. — Discussion on the distribution of wealth.

#### *Biological society, Washington.*

Dec. 12. — J. M. Flint, U.S.N., Exhibition of representative specimens of Foraminifera from the dredgings of the U.S. fish-commission steamer *Albatross*; Romya Hitchcock, The red snow; W. S. Barnard, Digestion, environmental, etc.; C. V. Riley, The mildews of the grape-vine; C. Hart Merriam, Description of a new sub species of the common eastern chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*).

#### *Engineers' club, Philadelphia.*

Dec. 5. — C. W. Buchholz, Engineering, its achievements and its reward.

#### *Connecticut academy of arts and sciences.*

Dec. 16. — C. S. Hastings, Some recent determinations of the velocity of light; Leonard Waldo, Description of an electric smelting-furnace.

#### *American academy of arts and sciences, Boston.*

Dec. 9. — William A. Rogers and Austin L. McRae, Experiments upon the determination of the temperature of metals as a function of their mass.

#### *Boston society of natural history.*

Dec. 2. — Frank H. Cushing, An Indian naturalist, or some Zuni conceptions of animal and plant life; S. H. Scudder, Some recent important discoveries among the oldest fossil insects.

Dec. 16. — W. O. Crosby, Notes on joint-structure.

#### *Society of arts, Boston.*

Dec. 10. — Lieut. F. G. Sprague, Application of an electrical system of propulsion on elevated railroads.

Dec. 23. — Lieut. E. L. Zalinski, U.S.A., The pneumatic dynamite gun, and the use of high explosives in warfare.

#### *Appalachian mountain club, Boston.*

Dec. 11. — E. C. Pickering, Geodetic observations from Moosilauke and Mansfield; Alford A. Butler, The Tripyramid slides of 1885; A. L. Goodrich, Notes on the region east of Wild River and south of the Androscoggin.

#### *Society of natural history, Cincinnati.*

Dec. 1. — J. Ralston Skinner, Measure of the mound-builders; Joseph F. James, A new species of Gomphoceras from the Trenton group of Wisconsin; A. P. Morgan, The Polyporei of the Miami valley; T. H. Aldrich, Tertiary fossils of Alabama.

#### *Kansas academy of science.*

Nov. 10, annual meeting. — F. H. Snow, A fossil bird-track in the Dakota sandstone; Robert Hay, A geological section down Fall River; R. J. Brown, Natural gas; F. W. Cragin, A foraminiferous limestone that admits of a polish like marble; The natural history of Barber county; A. H. Thompson, The relation of the state geological survey to the national survey; J. T. Lovewell, Studies on the rainfall of the state, showing no sensible increase;